

★ HOLY WEEK ★
DEVOTIONAL

TERRA
NOVA CHURCH

Table of Contents

Introduction

Invocation

Devotionals

Maundy Thursday | I AM There

Good Friday | I AM Provider

Black Saturday | I AM Peace

Easter Sunday | I AM Shepherd

Benediction

Introduction

We want to see more clearly and follow after God more faithfully. We know God reveals Himself in scripture – His Word. The Word reveals His nature, His promises, His attributes and His actions. Scripture also reveals His names. We study Christ because He is the visible image of the invisible God, and in Him the fullness of the Divine dwells in human form. Through the Spirit, who helps us understand scripture more fully, we experience His active hand in our lives.

We want to experience more of Him - His unchanging, unsearchable, holy and infinite person. This Holy Week, as a community, we are purposefully taking time to fast from material things to experience the Eternal. We want to know more deeply Him in whose image we are created. As we do, we become informed of who we were designed to be and how we can reflect Him more clearly.

But where do we look? Where shall we begin to navigate the endless sea that is our God? This study aims to see God by how He chooses to reveal Himself through His names. There are several names of God in the Hebrew text – from Elohim, Yahweh, El-Shaddai, and Adonai. We will spend our time focusing on four of these names during the four days from Maundy Thursday to Easter Sunday. For each name, we will study the Word to see how that name reveals to us more of who God is and who He wants us to know Him as. These names are not simply adjectives; they are nouns. They are the essence of God Himself and how we experience Him in the life of Christ.

There will be questions and thoughts to ponder so that we can embrace these truths in our own lives – A time for us to internalize truth, let its light shine in the dark places of our hearts, and allow it to transform our lives to be more like Him.

There will be time to consider how we can more fully and more clearly reflect these truths. As ministers of reconciliation, do these truths take such root within us so that our hands and feet are moved to demonstrate the good news to those with whom we do life? Are we the aroma of life for a dying and lost world?

There will be prayers and songs of worship that declare back to God the same traits and characteristics that His name reveals. Additionally, there is “Table Talk” aimed at having conversations about what we are studying with our children.

Let us seek him diligently, lay claim to the riches, honor, wealth and righteousness that He is. Then let us go and share that with others. While we fast, let us taste and see that the Lord is good. Let us feed the poor in Spirit with the richness of Him.

Pastor Paul Gordon [on behalf of the Elders of Terra Nova Church]

P.S. - A special thanks to those in our community who aided the completion of this devotional with writing and editing: Jason & Sarah Gorss, Erika Groff, Aimee Taylor, Scott & Patty Womer, Nicole Gordon and Ed Marcelle.

Invocation

O Almighty God, Who pours out on all who desire it the spirit of grace and supplication:

Deliver us, when we draw near to Thee, from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections, we may worship Thee in spirit and truth.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Who is our perfect, exalted and eternal High priest:

Be ever with us; be our shield and guard us; be our light and overshadow us; be our shepherd and guide us. Open our eyes, and give us ears that hear your voice.

O Powerful Holy Spirit, who dwells within us and opens our hearts to the richness of the Word:

Come down upon us and subdue us from Heaven, where the ordinary is made glorious, and glory seems but ordinary. Bathe us with the brilliance of Your light like dew.

For it is through the strong name of our Savior we humbly ask. Praise to you - our Eternal Father, the Glorious Son, and the Ever-present Spirit.

Amen.

Maundy Thursday

Experience the Eternal Name Revealed | I AM There - Ezekiel 48.35
Other Scripture | Colossians 1.15-20 & John 13 & Revelation 21.1-3

All the law, prophets and Psalms prepared the Hebrew people for the day described in Matthew 21.9. Every event had led up to this supreme moment - every hope, every promise and every assurance. The great promises were to be fulfilled, the supreme hope of the Israelites realized. This was the joy of the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem. The people were praising the arrival of their Messiah – and God’s deliverance of His people. Christ even says that if the people didn’t rejoice like this, “the very stones would cry out”! Today, here is where we want to dwell. We know the story of the rest of the week – but remain here in this place – with the triumphal presence of your Lord. Your King has come. God is present.

The presence of God is a hallmark and glory of our faith. Our Lord is not a distant deity. Scripture is the story of God’s perpetual pursuing presence. It is seen in the creation story; His personal covenant with Israel through Abraham, Isaac & Jacob; His delivering presence out of Egypt and through the wilderness: His dwelling place in the Promised Land in the tabernacle and the temple. The psalmists and the prophets also regularly declare and seek out the presence of God.

God has made Himself most accessible to us – and understood by us – by looking like us. The incarnation is God becoming flesh and physically being present with us. John tells us the Word became flesh, dwelt among us, and was full of grace and truth. Colossians 1 teaches us that Christ is the image of the invisible God and that in Him the fullness of God was pleased to dwell with man.

Can you imagine partaking in the Passover meal with the Lord? Praise Him! Call out Hosanna! Recline on His chest, feast in His presence at the table of His grace. Can you imagine having your feet washed by your Lord? John 13 shares the story of the Last Supper where we see not only God present with His disciples, but Christ demonstrating humble service.

The New Testament goes on to teach that after Christ’s resurrection, God has established His presence through the Holy Spirit’s dwelling in our hearts. Our bodies have become the holy temple. [Ephesians 2.18-22, 1 Corinthians 3.16-17, and 2 Corinthians 6.16] Do we realize the resource and strength that is at our disposal through faith in Christ?! God’s presence – His glory – abides in us as His temple!

Let’s also remember that God’s presence isn’t just a character trait: it is His nature that we see revealed in His name. In Ezekiel 48.35, we see this name revealed through a prophecy of the future, eternal Holy City, with the declaration, “The Lord Is There”. This same promise is given in Revelation Chapter 21.1-3. Here, John is seeing a vision of the New Heaven and Earth and shares, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be their God.” His presence is the essence of who He is.

God was present from the beginning. God came to tabernacle with us. God dwells within us. God is there ahead of us.

Embrace the Name Internally

When was the last time you met with Christ and rested in His presence in grace? What disciplines can you put in your life to make this a more regular occurrence?

Maundy Thursday is historically celebrated with foot-washing as we say in the John 13 passage. How are you like Peter - in holding back from allowing God to do what He wants in you? To cleanse and deliver you?

Do you believe the lie that your sin is keeping from the presence of a loving God right now?

Reflect the Name Externally

Recall again the foot-washing passage. Jesus calls Himself Lord and teacher and tells us to obey and follow His instruction. How are you serving others in the church?

How do you best show the presence of Christ where you work, live and play? Have you ever considered this? Christ is present in His church now, and you are made and tasked to be an individual incarnation.

Would you pray for two people specifically who you are regularly present with - that you could share the good news of God’s loving presence and redemption with them?

Maundy Thursday

Hymn of Worship

I Glory in Christ

God forbid that I should glory,
save in the Redeemer's cross.
Counting shame for Him but honor,
counting earthly gain for loss
All the love of God is here,
oh, love that casteth out all fear.

God forbid that I should glory,
save in Christ, my Lord alone
Him I lean on, Him I follow,
Him before the world I own.
All the love of God is here,
oh, love that casteth out all fear.

God forbid that I should glory,
save in Christ the Son of God.
Him who sought me, Him who bought me,
Him who washed me in His blood.
All the love of God is here,
oh, love that casteth out all fear.

Oh, love that casteth out all fear.

Words by: Horatius Bonar
Music by: Sandra McCracken

Table Talk

Think about how dirty your feet can get play outside on a summer day in bare feet. Now imagine you came inside your house and sitting in your living room was a great king or the President of the United States. How would you react if he were to get down on his knees and wash your feet?

Read John 13:1-16. The New International Readers Version (NIRV) is an easy, simpler version for reading with your children. Also, consider reading "The Servant King" in the [Jesus Storybook Bible](#).

What was Peter's reaction to Jesus trying to wash his feet? Was it the same as yours? Jesus is far more important than any king or president, yet he gave up his throne in heaven to come serve us. He gave up everything to be with us, even his own life.

Prayer

based on Exodus 33 & 34

Father,

If by Your grace, we may find favor in Your sight, please keep us in Your presence. Be merciful to our wandering minds and hearts. Keep us in Your kindness so that we can know you more. We are Your creation and we long to give You glory.

Do not allow us to stray from Your presence. Give us hearts that hear the voice of Your Spirits presence, for we do now want to be where You are not. Your presence is our identity, our joy, our hope and our rest.

Spirit, reveal to us Your glory and Your truth. Make us alive with Your presence in our hearts.

Continue to pardon our iniquity and keep us in Your will. We long for Your favor and Your eternal presence.

These things we only ask through Christ who reconciles us.

Amen.

Good Friday

Experience the Eternal Name Revealed | I AM Provider - Genesis 22.1-14
Other Scripture | John 1.29-34 & Hebrews 10.1-10

We've experienced the triumphal entry of Palm Sunday. We've feasted in the presence of the Messiah at the Passover. Now that He is present the supreme hope of our hearts will be realized. Right?

Let's return to Abraham, the father of the Israelites. We are familiar with the story – God covenants with Abraham to bless him, to give him the promised land, to make his name great, and that a nation set apart for God would come from Abraham. In Abraham and Sarah's old age, God finally declared a son, Isaac, would be born and through whom His covenant would continue. Joy and fulfillment of the covenant had arrived.

In Genesis 22.1-14 we see God make an astounding request of Abraham - to offer Isaac as a burnt offering. Can we imagine the depth of perplexity and anguish that this request mustered up in Abraham's soul? Nonetheless, Abraham believed in God and nearly carries this sacrifice out. How much of that faith wavered as he placed Isaac on the altar - we don't know. But just before the sacrifice is made God reveals Himself, stops Abraham, provides a substitute sacrifice in the form of a ram. Here is where God reveals himself as I AM Provider. Nathan Stone in Names of God, shares that "here is where we see man's extremity is ever God's opportunity for deliverance and providence".!

We see and feel God as our provider throughout Scripture – from creation, the Abraham story, the Exodus, the law, the prophets and as we will see – in the life of Christ. In giving the law, God continues to reveal his heart as our Provider. What the law was intended to provide is more fully revealed to us in Hebrews 10 where we learn the law was given for two reasons. The first reason demonstrated our inability to meet God's righteous and holy standard. The second reason for the law is meant to be a shadow of the good things to come. In other words, the law was given to remind us of our sin that separates us from God. Likewise, to remind us that sacrifices were required to be a reminder of the need for forgiveness and reconciliation with God.

The law was not to be permanent but a portrayal of a future perfect and ultimate sacrifice – for the routine sacrifices of bulls and goats cannot make ultimate atonement. Man needed a Lamb of God. As our Provider, God came to provide the necessary sacrifice in the person of Jesus Christ. In John 1, John the Baptist declares, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!". Christ says in Hebrews 10.9, "Here I am, I have come to do your will". And by that will, we are made holy through the sacrifice of the Lamb of God.

On the cross is the atoning sacrifice that only God can provide. On the cross, in the life of Jesus Christ, God again reveals His name, I AM Provider.

As Abraham looked up and saw the substitutionary ram – lift up your eyes and see your substitutionary, atoning sacrifice on the cross – provided to you by the Provider Himself.

Embrace the Name Internally

Where are you in need of atonement? What sins do you bring to the cross? Perhaps these are new sins or continuing sins. Bring them to the foot of the cross in confession. Ask Jesus to pay for those sins. Ask for repentance.

Do you have trusted brothers or sisters who help you have sight of your sin? If not, perhaps you could be praying for this and begin taking steps to identifying these people.

In his book, Doctrine of Repentance, Thomas Watson advises we should deal with sin through 6 stages. 1. Sight of Sin 2. Sorrow for sin 3. Confession of Sin 4. Shame for Sin 5. Hatred of Sin 6. Turning from Sin. It might be helpful to identify what stage you might be in with a sin in your life and seek help to work through these stages.

Reflect the Name Externally

We are to forgive as we have been forgiven in Christ. We are a people who are taught to pray daily for daily bread and forgiveness. We are told we are forgiven as we forgive others.

Take some time this Good Friday to make a list of forgiveness encounters. Pray about it, speak your peace where necessary. Where it would be helpful toward reconciliation, talk to the person about forgiveness. Where it is not possible to talk, write down what they did and what you are forgiving. Tear it up. Feel free to scatter them as far as east is from the west, or just imagine that and throw them away.

Good Friday

Hymn of Worship

How Deep the Father's Love For Us

How deep the Father's love for us
How vast beyond all measure
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure
How great the pain of searing loss
The Father turns His face away
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory

Behold the Man upon a cross
My sin upon His shoulders
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers
It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished
His dying breath has brought me life
I know that it is finished

I will not boast in anything
No gifts, no power, no wisdom
But I will boast in Jesus Christ
His death and resurrection
Why should I gain from His reward
I cannot give an answer
But this I know with all my heart
His wounds have paid my ransom

by: Stuart Townend

Table Talk

Read Genesis 22.1-14. The New International Readers Version (NIRV) is an easy, simpler version for reading with your children. Also, consider reading "The Present" in the Jesus Storybook Bible.

Do you think Abraham was scared to obey God?

What did Abraham do?

And what did God do?

Abraham obeyed God even though he was very afraid, and God provided the sacrifice so Abraham would not have to do it. Can you think of a situation in your life where you have been scared to obey God, even though you know it is the right thing?

Maybe its telling your friends about God even though they might make fun of you.

Or perhaps being kind to a person who is being teased, even though it means you might get teased too.

Sometimes God wants you to obey first and then He will help you get through the hard situation.

Prayer

from Valley of Vision

Father,

Enlarge my heart, warm my affections,
open my lips, supply words that proclaim
'love lusters at Calvary'.

There grace removes my burdens and
heaps them on thy Son, made a
transgressor, a curse, and sin for me; There
the infinite attributes were magnified, and
infinite atonement was made; There infinite
punishment was due, and infinite
punishment was endured.

Christ was all anguish that I might be all joy,
cast off that I might be brought in, stripped
that I might be clothed, wounded that I
might be healed, tormented that I might be
comforted, made a shame that I might
inherit glory. entered darkness that I might
have eternal light.

My Saviour wept that all tears might be
wiped from my eyes, groaned that I might
have endless song, bowed his head that I
might uplift mine, closed his eyes in death
that I might gaze on unclouded brightness,
expired that I might forever live.

O Father, who spared not thine only Son
that thou mightiest spare me, Help me to
adore thee by lips and life.

Go forth, O conquering God, and show me
the cross, mighty to subdue, comfort and
save.

Amen

Black Saturday

Experience the Eternal Name Revealed | I AM Peace - Judges 6.11-24
Other Scripture | Psalm 29 & John 16

Embrace the Name Internally

Today, place yourself where Christ's disciples were. In between the crucifixion and resurrection. They had not yet seen the resurrection. Feel the turmoil in their hearts as they saw their Lord be crucified. One of their own had betrayed them and another denied even knowing Christ. The temple veil was torn. They were mourning and weeping. In fear, they scattered and hid. Can you feel the confusion? The chaos? The doubt and questioning? The sense of forsakenness?

The book of Judges describes a time for the nation of Israel that was marked by chaos, restlessness, and oppression. A time where Israel was conquered and divided, and a time in which we are told every man did that which was right in his own eyes. In this passage in Judges, an angel of the Lord calls on the lowly Gideon to deliver Israel. Amid all the turmoil, chaos, war, tragedy, and oppression all around Gideon, God pursues Gideon and reveals himself by Yahweh Shalom, "I AM Peace." Stop and consider this for a moment: God doesn't reveal himself at this moment as an agent of deliverance, as a conquering warrior, or a righteous king to claim control of his nation. He enters and reveals Himself as peace in the middle of oppression.

The Psalmist tells us in Psalm 29 that the Lord sits enthroned over all things. His voice is full of majesty, and His voice breaks the cedars of the forest. His voice is over all the waters, and His voice flashes forth flames. His voice calls forth new life, and His voice strips the forests bare. He sits enthroned over the flood, and He sits enthroned as King. In all this, the Lord desires to bless His people with peace.

Isaiah prophesied Christ to be the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9.6) and at His birth, Luke writes that peace was now on earth. Paul tells us that through Christ, we have peace with God – the harmonious relationship our hearts were created for has been restored (Colossians 1.20).

In John 16, Christ is teaching His disciples of everything that is about to happen. He tells them He will be handed over, killed, but will rise on the third day. He shares He will leave to go be with the Father and the Holy Spirit will come and indwell His people. At the end of His teaching, Christ reveals to them He has told them all these things so they may have peace.

In John 20 and Luke 24, when the resurrected Christ appears to the gathered disciples, His first words are "Peace be with you". He reminds them His presence is Peace. He calms all restlessness. He quiets our fears. He stills the storms. He reconciles the broken.

Throughout the Old Testament we see our Sovereign God allow trials, troubles, oppression, and despair. Christ, the fullness of God's peace, tells us that we will have tribulation in this world – but he calls us to take heart for He has overcome the world. Let us not forget His hand holds all things together, and all things will be reconciled through Him – providing peace through the blood of His cross. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid." ~ John 14.27

Where in your life right now are you living as the disciples did in between Good Friday and Easter Sunday? Have we heard from God that in this world, trials will come? Do we remember that when the trials come, John 16 tells us to take heart, rest in Him - because He has overcome the world.

What valley of life are you walking through not realizing the God of Peace is walking along side you?

Where is your heart believing the lie that your sin keeps you from peace with God? Are you still hiding the dark corners of your heart in fear? Why do we not lay claim to the finished and reconciling work of Christ?

Reflect the Name Externally

As God comes to Gideon in the middle of Israel's oppression, who is a person in the midst of a trial that we can provide with a loving presence? Do they need to experience that we, as God's ambassadors, carry His peace for them?

Are we a people who place burdens onto others? Or are we a people that work to break the yoke of oppression in people's lives?

Don't just think about these things; maybe take the time to write down an action plan to carry these ideas and convictions out.

Black Saturday

Hymn of Worship

The Solid Rock

My hope is built on nothing less
than Jesus' blood and righteousness
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
but wholly lean on Jesus' name.

When darkness seems to hide His face,
I rest on His unchanging grace
In every high and stormy gale,
my anchor holds within the veil

On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand
All other ground is sinking sand
All other ground is sinking sand

His oath, His covenant, His blood,
supports me in the whelming flood
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay

On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand
All other ground is sinking sand
All other ground is sinking sand

When He shall come with trumpet sound,
oh may I then in Him be found
Dressed in His righteousness alone,
faultless to stand before the throne

On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand
All other ground is sinking sand
All other ground is sinking sand

by: Edward Mote

Table Talk

If you love God, do you think everything in your life will always be good and go the way you want it to go?

Read Judges 6:1-16. The New International Readers Version (NIRV) is an easy, simpler version for reading with your children.

Things were clearly going very badly for the Israelites. How did they respond? They said, "Why has all of this happened to us? Where are all of the wonderful things God has promised? Why has God deserted us?"

But then God sent Gideon to rescue them, just as He always had done.

The disciples were similarly in despair after the death of Jesus. They too had forgotten to trust in the promises of God, but they were soon reminded of God's faithfulness.

How do you respond when things don't go the way you want them to go?

Do you get angry?

Do you forget about all the good things in your life when a few bad things happen?

Sometimes God doesn't give us what we want because what we want is bad for us, just like your parents. You need to trust that God loves you and knows what's best for you.

Prayer

based on Psalm 29

Father,

Your name is great - full of all glory and strength. Please let me not be convinced otherwise. Keep my heart from seeking glory in myself or finding strength in things that fail.

Give me grace to continually give you the honor your holiness is due. Lord, I know you control everything and if you speak - all creation cries out.

In your voice is power and majesty to roll out thunder, but also to calm the seas.

Your voice breaks my strong will, and makes me cry out for joy in your presence.

Your voice flashes out a purifying fire, shakes my foundations, and provides the balm of my soul.

Your voice strips me of anything good, and sustains my new life.

Your voice brings fear to my heart, and my mind is reassured of your peace.

Before everyone, let me only praise you and rest in your sovereign hand. For I know you bring the flood. I know you are my King, my good, my strength and the source of all my peace.

Amen.

Easter Sunday

Experience the Eternal Name Revealed | I AM Shepherd - Psalm 23
Other Scripture | Ezekiel 34.11-16 & John 10.1-18 & Revelation 7.9-17

Embrace the Name Internally

On Easter Sunday we return to one of the more popular of Psalms of David, perhaps written in his latter years as he reflected on all of his life and saw the sovereign hand of God shepherding him through the pastures and valleys. The psalm has the warmth of a shepherd's presence through many seasons of life – a life full of provision, sobered by trials, mellowed with time, slandered by enemies. A life marred with warfare, rebellion, and sordid sin. In all this, David finds God's goodness and guiding presence through it all. With a heart comforted by reflecting on where God has led him, fed him, and cared for him, David is confident God's sovereign staff will never leave him. He knows he is hemmed in behind and before by a good shepherd.

In Ezekiel 34.11-16, we see God as a shepherd that will never forsake us. He will always pursue us and find us when we stray. He will bind up the injured, strengthen the weak, and provide a place for his sheep to dwell. In Isaiah 40.11, we are told the Messiah will tend to the flock like a shepherd. He will gather them, carry them and gently lead them.

In Luke 24.44-47, after the glorious Resurrection, Jesus opens the disciples' minds to understand all the Scriptures and how all that was written in the Law, in the Prophets and the Psalms was written about Himself. Christ is the Good Shepherd spoken of throughout the Old Testament. In John 10.1-18, Christ is claiming fulfillment of all these OT prophecies. He is declaring that He is the embodiment of Psalm 23.

On Good Friday, we see Christ as our atoning Lamb of God. On Easter Sunday, we know Christ as our Good Shepherd. Our guide in all seasons of life. Our shepherd has led us through the mire, the valley, and declared victory over death and the grave. Peter tells us in 1 Peter 2.25 that we strayed like sheep, but in Christ are now returned to our Shepherd and Overseer of our souls.

Revelation 7.9-17 paints a strikingly beautiful picture of the eternal life that awaits us. There in the Eternal City, before the throne of God is a multitude without number. Peoples of all nations, tribes and tongues are standing before the Lamb crying out, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!' The scene ends with verses 15-17:

"Therefore they are before the throne of God,
and serve Him day and night in His temple;
and He who sits on the throne will shelter them with His presence.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore;
the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat.

For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their Shepherd,
and He will guide them to springs of living water,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Are we listening for the voice of our Shepherd? Are we wandering and feeding on food that is not God's? In what ways can you better tune your heart to hear your Shepherd's voice more consistently and clearly?

Do we live as though the presence of our Shepherd is our most precious privilege and possession? Do we embrace His abundance while we walk through the valleys of our lives?

Reflect the Name Externally

As Christ, our Shepherd pursues us, seeks us out when we wander - who do you know in your life right now that is outside the fold of God? How can you go to them and help them hear the calling of Christ on their life?

In what ways can we reflect a hunger that is not for things this world offers, but for the food & water that Christ provides?

As Christ prepares a table for us, are we preparing a table for the hungry, the widowed, the orphaned, the poor, and the foreigner among us? Maybe commit to an action step better demonstrating the gospel in this manner.

Easter Sunday

Hymn of Worship

I Know That My Redeemer Lives

I know that my Redeemer lives
What comfort this sweet sentence gives
He lives, He lives who once was dead
He lives my everliving head

He lives to silence all my fears
He lives to wipe away my tears
He lives to calm my troubled heart
He lives all blessings to impart
He lives all blessings to impart

He lives to grant me daily breath
He lives and I shall conquer death
He lives and while I live I'll sing
He lives my Prophet, Priest and King

He lives triumphant from the grave
He lives eternally to save
What joy this blest assurance gives
I know that my Redeemer lives
I know that my Redeemer lives

Words by: Samuel Medley
Music by: John Hatton

Table Talk

Sheep are some of the most helpless animals in the world, which is why they need a shepherd to constantly watch them, protect them, and lead them to find food and water. They can't take care of themselves at all. The Bible says that we are like sheep. Without constant supervision, we wander away and get into trouble.

The Bible also says Jesus is "the Good Shepherd". Read Psalm 23. The New International Readers Version (NIRV) is an easy, simpler version for reading with your children. Also, consider reading "The Good Shepherd" in the Jesus Story Book Bible.

How is Jesus like a shepherd?

What does a good shepherd do for his sheep?

Jesus also said, "My sheep listen to my voice ... and they follow me."

Why is it important to listen to Jesus' voice?

How do we get to know the voice of the Good Shepherd so we can follow him?

Prayer

from Celtic Daily Prayer

Lord,

I depend wholly on Thee,
wean me from all other dependences,
Thou art my all, thou dost overrule and
delight in me.

Thou art the foundation of goodness,
how can I distrust Thee?
How can I be anxious about what happens
to me?

In the light of Thy preciousness the world
and all its enjoyments are infinitely poor:
I value the favour of men no more than
pebbles.

Amid the blessings I receive from Thee may
I never lose the heart of a stranger.

Amen.

Benediction

Now may the God of peace
who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus,
the great Shepherd of the sheep,
by the blood of the eternal covenant,
equip you with everything good
that you may do His will,
working in us that which is pleasing in His sight,
through Jesus Christ,
to whom be glory forever and ever.
Amen.

~ Hebrews 13.20-21 ~